



*U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Environmental Management*

*Office of
Transportation*



Motor Carrier Evaluation Program (MCEP)

Selecting a responsible and efficient motor carrier is a critical part of safely transporting radioactive materials and hazardous wastes. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Motor Carrier Evaluation Program (MCEP) makes every effort to ensure the quality of carriers, drivers and equipment transporting DOE's commodities. Since 1989, MCEP has played a vital role in maintaining the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) excellent shipping record in the transportation of hazardous waste and radioactive materials. The MCEP assists DOE Field Element and contractor transportation personnel with selecting qualified carriers to transport DOE-owned radioactive materials and hazardous wastes.

Previous versions of the program ensured that at the time of evaluation, carriers transporting DOE-owned materials were knowledgeable of, and compliant with, the regulations. These evaluations were performed on a rotational basis, with 3-5 years between visits, and utilized information obtained directly from the carrier, from the sites using that carrier and DOT statistical information from roadside inspections and compliance reviews.

Since 2001, new revisions to the program have introduced a statistical database that incorporates all of the previous information and adds key elements of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Motor Carrier Safety Status Measurement System (SafeStat) program into the MCEP. The database creates a process by which a carrier's safety and operational performance are monitored and measured against other carriers and a set of minimum DOE standards on a continuing basis. More importantly, MCEP has become proactive rather than reactive since the on-going monitoring process identifies problems and negative trends in carriers that are addressed before they become serious enough to require removal from the list of qualified carriers.

3 Stages of MCEP Process:

There are three major parts of MCEP, and all stages are supported by results from the DOT's SafeStat.

1. Initial Screening Stage

The screening stage will be an initial carrier evaluation based heavily on a safety assessment of the carrier's operations. This evaluation will be primarily based on the carrier's most recent SafeStat results and carrier-

supplied information. Carriers who meet the initial screening criteria will advance to the next stage.

2. Onsite Evaluation Stage

Primarily, only those carriers applying for first-time DOE approval will be subject to an onsite evaluation, along with approved carriers whose monitored performance creates serious questions about their ability to perform (a re-evaluation). The onsite evaluation will be used to validate both DOT and DOE requirements. The onsite evaluation puts emphasis on validating the carrier's operational qualifications in areas of emergency preparedness and response, carrier safety/security, hazardous materials training, quality assurance, financial stability, levels of insurance, driver qualification files, drivers' hours of service, and maintenance files to determine the carrier's compliance to the applicable regulations. Information obtained during the onsite evaluation along with the SafeStat results will be used to determine carrier eligibility. Carriers that meet the MCEP eligibility are identified as approved for use by traffic managers throughout the DOE complex.

The procedures for an approved carrier's re-evaluation are similar, but the focus will be only on the problem areas (i.e. drivers, equipment, etc...). The re-evaluation puts emphasis on verifying data and any implementation of corrective actions.

3. Monitoring Stage

Once approved, carriers are continuously monitored via monthly assessments to ensure they continue to meet DOT and DOE requirements. Carrier performance information is acquired from the most recent DOT SafeStat results. An annual update of information

provided by the carrier identifies any significant changes in its business practices or performance. Carriers are also assessed on their DOE operational performance. Each DOE installation submits annually an End User Survey evaluating the performance of each of the carriers serving that facility. This information is incorporated into the monitoring process and measures such things as on-time pick up and delivery, knowledge of the drivers and carrier representatives, condition of the equipment and the handling of documentation and damage claims.

This MCEP process allows the DOE

to eliminate unqualified carriers in the initial stage and to ensure that qualified carriers maintain the standards required by the MCEP.

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